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EXAMINER	
LIU, BEN H	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/799,239	BROWN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	BEN H. LIU	2416	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *29 October 2008*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-22* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-22* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This office action is in response to an amendment/response filed on October 29th, 2008.

2. No claims have been amended.

3. No claims have been cancelled.

4. No claims have been added.

5. Claims 1-22 are currently pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham* **v.** *John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

8. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

9. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-17, 19, 21, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amit (U.S. Patent 7,197,045) in view of Stark et al. (U.S. Patent 6,963,535).

For claim 1, Amit discloses a processor comprising at least a portion of a first split transmit and receive media access controller, the split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another *(see column 2 lines 28-33, which recite separated MAC receivers and transmitters)*; wherein the processor comprises an interface for directing signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller *(column 5 lines 1-14, which recite a CPU 230 that directs packets between receivers and transmitters)*.

Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein signals from a first split transmit and receive media access controller are multiplexed with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer

scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses multiplexers that include a MAC data-in bus and MAC data-out bus *(see column 3 lines 19-30)* that allows data from one MAC interface to reach another MAC interface *(see figure 3)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus and multiplexers as taught by Stark et al. can be coupled between the switch interface 352 and each of the receive 336 or transmit 334 MAC interfaces as taught by Amit to provide an interface that is configured to multiplex signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

For claims 3, 21 and 22, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein one or more of the transmit units are implemented on a first integrated circuit and one or more of the receive units are implemented on a second integrated circuit *(see column 2 lines 34-42)*.

For claim 5, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another *(see column 2 lines 28-33, which recite separated MAC receivers and transmitters)*. Amit

discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein an interface comprises a receive interface block coupled to a generate interface block via an interface bus, the generate interface block receiving signals from a plurality of media access controller receive units and multiplexing the signals onto the interface bus for delivery to the receive interface block, the receive interface block demultiplexing the signals from the interface bus for delivery to appropriates ones of a plurality of media access controller transmit units. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses multiplexers that include a MAC data-in bus (a generate interface block) and MAC data-out bus (a receive interface block) *(see column 3 lines 19-30)* that allows data from one MAC interface to reach another MAC interface *(see figure 3)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus can be implemented by coupling the MAC bus as taught by Stark et al. between the CPU and switch interface of the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

For claim 7, Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the interface bus comprises a five-bit wide information signal bus and at least one clock signal line. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus

that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC includes a 32 bit information signal bus *(see figures 4-5, which recite signal buses 34 and 46)* as well as a clock signal *(see column 8 lines 28-35 and figures 19-22, which recite a clocking signal that controls the buses)*. The information bus as taught by Stark et al. is 32 bits wide but is a design choice that may be modified according to the complexity and desired performance of the bus system. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using an information bus and clocking signal as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus can be implemented by coupling the MAC bus as taught by Stark et al. between the CPU and switch interface of the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

For claim 8, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein the interface bus comprises a separate dedicated information signal bus for delivering carrier sense signals between one or more of the receive units and one or more of the transmit units in an internal mode of operation of the interface *(see column 5 lines 20-27, which recite an Ethernet switch interface 352 wherein the Ethernet protocol employs carrier sense multiple access to deliver a carrier signal to indicate impending transmission)*.

For claim 9, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein the signals received by the generate interface block for delivery to the receive interface block comprise one or more of carrier sense signals, auto-negotiation signals, flow control signals, and deference reset signals *(see column 5 lines 20-27, which recite an Ethernet switch interface 352 wherein the Ethernet protocol employs carrier sense multiple access to deliver a carrier signal to indicate impending transmission)*.

For claim 10, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein the signals received by the generate interface block are multiplexed onto the interface bus using a priority-based selection mechanism which assigns the highest priority to the carrier sense signals, the second highest priority to the auto-negotiation signals, and lower priorities to the flow control and deference reset signals *(see column 6 lines 10-14, which recite a priority queue for different types of signals)*.

For claim 11, Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the interface operates in accordance with a state machine having at least a synchronization state, a control address state and one or more data states. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses state machines wherein the states control the operation of the bus with the location of the registers *(see column 9 lines 13-26 and figures 14-16)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that uses state machines as taught by

Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit The MAC bus that uses state machines can be implemented by coupling the MAC bus as taught by Stark et al. between the CPU and switch interface of the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The state machine for the bus can be implemented using registers that receive appropriate control signals as taught by Stark et al. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that uses state machines is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

For claim 12, Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the control address state carries information regarding signal type and signal interface address. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses state machines wherein the states control the operation of the bus with the location of the registers *(see column 9 lines 13-26 and figures 14-16)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that uses state machines as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus that uses state machines can be implemented by coupling the MAC bus as taught by Stark et al. between the CPU and switch interface of the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The state machine for the bus can be implemented using registers that receive appropriate control signals as taught by Stark et al. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that uses state machines is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

For claim 13, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein the interface comprises a plurality of channels, each having one or more ports associated therewith, and wherein a given signal to be directed between transmit and receive units of a given split transmit and receive media access controller is assigned to a particular channel and port of the interface *(see column 6 lines 15-21, which recite adding a descriptor to designate which queue a packet should go)*.

For claim 14, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein each of the channels may have up to eight ports, with a single-bit nibble address being utilized to identify a particular one of first and second four-port groups of a given eight-port channel *(see column 6 lines 15-21, which recite adding a descriptor used as an address to the appropriate queue)*.

For claim 15, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein the processor comprises an integrated circuit *(see column 2 lines 35-42, which recite a communication device that comprises a transmitter and receiver IC)*.

For claim 16, Amit discloses a processor comprising a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another wherein the processor comprises a network processor *(see column 2 lines 43-47, which recite a communication device that comprises a CPU processor)*.

For claim 17, Amit discloses a method for use in a processor comprising at least a portion of a first split transmit and receive media access controller, the split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another *(see column 2 lines 28-33, which recite separated MAC receivers and transmitters)*, the method comprising the step of multiplexing onto a common interface signals to be directed between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller *(column 5 lines 1-14, which recite a CPU 230 that directs packets between receivers and transmitters)*.

Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the method comprises the step of multiplexing onto a common interface signals to be directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses multiplexers that include a MAC data-in bus and MAC data-out bus *(see column 3 lines 19-30)* that allows data from one MAC interface to reach another MAC interface *(see figure 3)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus and multiplexers as taught by Stark et al. can be coupled between the switch interface 352 and each of the receive 336 or transmit 334 MAC interfaces as taught by Amit to provide an interface that is configured to multiplex signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media

access controller with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

For claim 19, Amit discloses an integrated circuit *(see column 2 lines 35-42, that recites implementing MAC units on an integrated circuit)* comprising at least a portion of a first split transmit and receive media access controller, the split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another *(see column 2 lines 28-33, which recite separated MAC receivers and transmitters)*; wherein the processor comprises an interface for directing signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller *(column 5 lines 1-14, which recite a CPU 230 that directs packets between receivers and transmitters)*.

Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein signals from a first split transmit and receive media access controller are multiplexed with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses multiplexers that include a MAC data-in bus and MAC data-out bus *(see column 3 lines 19-30)* that allows data from one MAC interface to reach another MAC interface *(see figure 3)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that

provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus and multiplexers as taught by Stark et al. can be coupled between the switch interface 352 and each of the receive 336 or transmit 334 MAC interfaces as taught by Amit to provide an interface that is configured to multiplex signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

10. Claims 2, 4, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amit (U.S. Patent 7,197,045) in view of Stark et al. (U.S. Patent 6,963,535) as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Bellenger (U.S. Patent 6,256,306).

For claims 2 and 20, Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein one or more of the transmit units are implemented in a first region of an integrated circuit, and one or more of the receive units are implemented in a second region of the integrated circuit, remote from the first region. Bellenger from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit *(see column 8 lines 10-19 and figure 3)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit as taught by Bellenger with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The

switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit can be implemented by replacing the MAC units on the same integrated circuit as taught by Bellenger with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The motivation for using the switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units is to improve the reliability of the system by reducing inter-chip signaling and data flow.

For claim 4, Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the interface is configured to deliver signals between one or more transmit units and one or more receive units where the transmit units and the receive units are implemented on the same integrated circuit. However, Amit discloses implementing a plurality of transmit and receive MAC units on separate integrated circuits *(see column 2 lines 35-42)*, thus providing an external mode of operation. Bellenger from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit 200 *(see column 8 lines 10-19 and figure 3)* that includes a bus 210 to deliver signals between the MAC units *(see figure 3)*. Specifically, Bellenger teaches a switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit *(see column 8 lines 10-19 and figure 3)* thus providing an internal mode of operation. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit as taught by Bellenger with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an

integrated circuit can be implemented by replacing the MAC units on the same integrated circuit as taught by Bellenger with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The motivation for using the switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units is to improve the reliability of the system by reducing inter-chip controls.

11. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amit (U.S. Patent 7,197,045) in view of Stark et al. (U.S. Patent 6,963,535) as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Appala et al. (U.S. Patent 6,862,265).

For claim 6, Amit and Stark et al. discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the interface block multiplexes the signals onto the interface bus utilizing a plurality of round-robin arbiters. Appala et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a round robin scheduler that supplies the data frames to the corresponding transmit port *(see column 4 lines57-67, column 5 lines 1-3, and figure 2)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the round robin scheduler that supplies the data frames to the corresponding transmit port as taught by Appala et al. with the processor including a split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another as taught by Amit and Stark et al. The round robin scheduler that supplies the data frames to the corresponding transmit port as taught by Appala et al. can be implemented by coupling the scheduler to the interface for directing signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the a split transmit and receive media access processor as taught by Amit and Stark et al. The

motivation for using the round robin scheduler that supplies the data frames to the corresponding transmit port as taught by Appala et al. with the split transmit and receive media access controller processor as taught by Amit and Stark et al. is to enable prioritized queuing of layer 2 network traffic.

12. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amit (U.S. Patent 7,197,045) in view of Stark et al. (U.S. Patent 6,963,535) and further in view of Wakemen et al. (U.S. Patent 5,790,786).

For claim 18, Amit discloses a processor comprising at least a portion of a first split transmit and receive media access controller, the split transmit and receive media access controller having a transmit unit and a receive unit physically separated from one another *(see column 2 lines 28-33, which recite separated MAC receivers and transmitters)*, wherein the processor multiplexes onto a common interface signals to be directed between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller *(column 5 lines 1-14, which recite a CPU 230 that directs packets between receivers and transmitters)*.

Amit discloses all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the processor comprises the step of multiplexing onto a common interface signals to be directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller. Stark et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces using a multiplexer scheme *(see abstract)*. The MAC bus uses multiplexers that include a MAC data-in bus and MAC data-out bus *(see column 3 lines 19-30)* that allows data from one MAC interface to reach another MAC

interface *(see figure 3)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use the MAC bus that provides connections between a number of MAC interfaces as taught by Stark et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The MAC bus and multiplexers as taught by Stark et al. can be coupled between the switch interface 352 and each of the receive 336 or transmit 334 MAC interfaces as taught by Amit to provide an interface that is configured to multiplex signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller.The motivation for using the MAC bus interface with the MAC interface that includes separated transmit and receive units is to improve the compatibility of the MAC communication bus with a variety of MAC interfaces.

Amit and Stark et al. disclose all the subject matter of the claimed invention with the exception wherein the processor includes processor-readable storage medium for use in conjunction with a processor, the medium having embodied therein processor-executable instructions implement the function of the processor. Wakeman et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a portion of a media access controller including a plurality of receive data path units that are multiplexed to a plurality of transmit data path units *(see column 2 lines 34-46)* that can be implemented by as processor-executable instructions *(see column 11 lines 1-13)*. Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use plurality of receive data path units are multiplexed with a plurality of transmit data path units through a bus interface unit implemented by software as taught by Wakeman et al. with the with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by

Amit. The plurality of receive data path units are multiplexed with a plurality of transmit data path units through a bus interface unit that is implemented by software as taught by Wakeman et al. can be implemented by replacing the transmit and receive data paths as taught by Wakeman et al with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit. The motivation for using the plurality of receive data path units are multiplexed with a plurality of transmit data path units through a bus interface unit that is implemented by software as taught by Wakeman et al. with the MAC interface that provides separate transmit and receive units as taught by Amit is to allow greater configurability of the system.

Response to Arguments

13. It is noted with appreciation that the Applicant has carefully considered the previous Office Action and noted that no ground of rejection is specified for claim 19. Claim 19 is currently rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amit (U.S. Patent 7,197,045) in view of Stark et al. (U.S. Patent 6,963,535). Accordingly, this Office Action is Non-Final.

14. Applicant's arguments filed August 12th, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

For claim 1, the Applicant first argues that "the interface set forth in the claim is expressly described as being configured to multiplex signals that are directed between the transmit unit and the receive unit of a first split transmit and receive MAC with signals that are directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of a second split transmit and receive MAC.

The arrangement shown in FIG. 3 of Stark and relied upon by the Examiner clearly fails to provide the particular type of multiplexing recited in claim 1."

However, the Applicant acknowledges that "FIG. 3 shows an arrangement which includes multiplexers 22 and 24, a buffer 10, and multiple MACs 12A, 12B and 12C." It is noted that the MAC bus contains three separate bus components including MAC Out data busses 26, MAC Out message busses 28, and a MAC In data busses 30 *(see column 3 lines 24-30)*. Since the MAC bus interface is bi-directional, it provides a data and signal path between the MAC layer interfaces 12a, 12b, and 12c. For instance, a path may start at MAC interface 12A, proceed to multiplexer 24 and multiplexer 22 via MAC In data bus 30, continue to buffer 10 via In Data RXD, return to multiplexer 22 via Out Data TXD, and end at MAC12C via MAC Out data busses 26. This path provides multiplexers 22 and 24 that multiplex signals directed between MAC interfaces as recited by claim 1.

Second, the Applicant argues that "the MACs 12 in FIG. 3 of Stark are not split transmit and receive MACs, nor does Stark disclose any interface which multiplexes signals that are directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of a first split MAC with signals that are directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of a second split MAC." It is noted that the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claim 1 combines the split MACs as taught by Amit with the multiplexer that multiplexes signals between MAC interfaces as taught by Stark et al. Therefore, the rejection does not rely on Stark et al. to teach split transmit and receive MACs.

Third, the Applicant argues that "Stark in fact teaches away from the claimed arrangement by teaching that each of the MACs 12 is apparently entirely self-contained, such that any signals directed between transmit and receive portions of a given such MAC 12 do not

even pass through the MAC bus comprising multiplexers 22 and 24." It is noted that Amit discloses a communication device 316 that includes one more receivers 336 and one more transmitters 334 *(see figure 3 and abstract)*. The MAC bus and multiplexers as taught by Stark et al. can be coupled between the switch interface 352 and each of the receive 336 or transmit 334 MAC interfaces as taught by Amit to provide an interface that is configured to multiplex signals between the transmit unit and the receive unit of the first split transmit and receive media access controller with signals directed between a transmit unit and a receive unit of at least a second split transmit and receive media access controller as disclosed by claim 1. Each split transmit and receive media access controller is connected to the multiplexer in a manner similar to the arrangement demonstrated by Stark et al. in figure 3 where MAC interfaces 12A, 12B, and 12C are connected to the multiplexers 22 and 24 as suggested by Stark et al. in figure 3.

For claim 4, the Applicant argues that "Bellenger clearly fail to teach or suggest the recited interface operable in internal and external modes of operation as recited in claim 4." It is noted that the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claim 4 relies on Bellenger to disclose a plurality of MAC units integrated on a single integrated circuit. Specifically, Bellenger from the same or similar fields of endeavor teach a switch node including a plurality of ports with MAC units integrated on an integrated circuit *(see column 8 lines 10-19 and figure 3)* thus providing an internal mode of operation. Amit discloses implementing a plurality of transmit and receive MAC units on separate integrated circuits *(see column 2 lines 35-42)*, thus providing an external mode of operation.

For claim 5, the Applicant argues that "Accordingly, the MAC bus of Stark fails to teach or suggest the recited generate interface block and receive interface block performing respective

multiplexing and demultiplexing operations." It is noted that the multiplexers 22 and 24 are coupled to a MAC bus that contains three separate bus components including MAC Out data busses 26, MAC Out message busses 28, and a MAC In data busses 30 *(see column 3 lines 24-30)*. Thus, the multiplexers 22 and 24 operate in a bi-directional manner and provide both the multiplexing and demultiplexing operations as recited by claim 5.

For at least the reasons provided above, the Applicant's arguments regarding independent claim 1 and similar arguments regarding independent claims 17-19 are not persuasive. The Applicant further argues that dependent claims 2-16 and 20-22 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies. Since the Applicant's arguments regarding independent claims 1 and 17-19 are not persuasive, dependent claims 2-16 and 20-22 have not been found to be allowable.

Conclusion

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BEN H. LIU whose telephone number is (571)270-3118. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00AM to 6:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky Ngo can be reached on (571)272-3139. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/Ricky Ngo/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2416

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